

1st Space Company Builds **STRONG BONDS**

By Chaplain (MAJ) Kevin Pies and MAJ Eric Little,
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LEFT TO RIGHT, SFC Wilfredo Cabili, SFC Charles L. Robinson III and SPC Kenneth Kamrowski of Alpha Detachment, 1st Space Company (JTAGS-Europe) laid a wreath at the Normandy National Military Cemetery.



PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Soldiers and Family members know what it means to sacrifice. With the frequent moves and missions in the Army, they know what it means to pack up and leave. They know what it means for a spouse to “go to the field” or deploy for an extended period of time. They know full well what it means to separate and sacrifice.

Undoubtedly, Soldiers and their relationships are taking a beating. So the Army is now putting back into families what the demands are taking out of them.

The Strong Bonds program is a Congress supported program and provides funds to the Army to help Soldiers build stronger relationships. There are specialized programs for married and single Soldiers. There are also programs to help those Soldiers who will soon deploy, are deployed or will redeploy.

According to the Strong Bonds Web site at www.strongbonds.org, the program “empowers Soldiers and their loved ones with relationship-building skills and connects them to community health and support resources. It is a holistic, preventative program committed to the restoration and preservation of Army families, even those near crisis. The program is initiated and led by the Army Chaplains. More than 90 percent of those who have attended the program rate it positively.”

The program typically involves an overnight off site retreat at a four or five-star facility with an excursion built in. There are also seminar-based class instruction with childcare often provided for couples so that they can focus their attention on the curriculum offered. The curriculum is selected from just some of the following topics: Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage, How to Avoid Marrying a JERK, Marriage: Lasting Intimacy Through Nurturing, Knowledge and Skill (LINKS), Survival Skills for Healthy Families by Family Wellness, Seven Habits of Highly Effective Army Families, Couples Communication and Eight Habits of Highly Successful Marriages

Another benefit of the Strong Bonds program is that units have statistically reported that they not only bond with their loved ones but they begin to bond with other Army families, chaplains and the Army community as a whole. This in turn builds a strong unit cohesion and esprit de’ corps and the support system builds. And the enjoyment of serving in this demanding military can actually be a joy rather than a chore.

Over the last year, events have occurred in Colorado, Alaska, Germany, Korea and Japan. More events are planned for the coming year at various global locations. Contact your unit chaplain or chaplain assistant for information about future events.

Alpha Detachment, 1st Space Company (JTAGS-Europe) stands in front of the Belleau Wood memorial near Paris, France. The memorial commemorates a WWI Battle between U.S., British and French allied forces against Germany.



Photos courtesy MAJ Eric Little and Chaplain (MAJ) Kevin Pies

ALPHA Detachment Experience

CAEN, France — Command Chaplain (MAJ) Kevin Pies led Strong Bonds training for 20 Officers, Warrant Officers, Noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers with Alpha Detachment, 1st Space Company (JTAGS-Europe) in late August. The training was conducted Aug. 20-24 at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Caen, France. The location of the training event gave the attendees some memorable places to visit as well. Highlights included Normandy Beach, Normandy National Military Cemetery, the Normandy American Cemetery, the Belleau Wood Memorial and the 1st Infantry Division Memorial.

SFC Charles L. Robinson III, who previously deployed to Iraq with the 1st Infantry Division before being assigned to Alpha Detachment, 1st Space Company, was promoted on Normandy Beach in front of the 1st Infantry Division Memorial. Robinson, along with SFC Wilfredo Cabili and SPC Kenneth Kamrowski, reverently laid a wreath at the Normandy National Military Cemetery.



CSM (ret.) Dwight Anderson provides a history lesson to the Soldiers of Alpha Detachment, 1st Space Company (JTAGS-Europe) at the Normandy American Cemetery.



SFC Charles L. Robinson III gives his promotion speech on Normandy Beach in front of the 1st Infantry Division memorial. Robinson deployed to Iraq with the 1st Infantry Division before being assigned to Alpha Detachment, 1st Space Company (JTAGS-Europe).